

I have been fortunate enough to have had the privilege to visit Israel on several occasions, and have seen the struggles Israelis face daily. However, I have also seen their perseverance and determination to create a peaceful and prosperous state and this gives me hope for future peace in the region.

I would again like to congratulate Israel on 60 years of freedom and independence and I look forward to many more years of working together.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I have discovered that on February 13, 2008, my vote on rollcall vote No. 48 did not register in the voting system.

On this vote, I voted in favor of ordering the previous question on H. Res. 976, rollcall vote No. 48.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, due to the recent death of a family friend and my attendance at his funeral service, I was unable to vote on three measures on the House floor on March 31, 2008.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on H.R. 3352, Hydrographic Services Improvement Act Amendments of 2007. I would have also voted "yes" on H.R. 2675, Help to Access Land for the Education of Scouts Act, and "yes" on H. Con. Res. 302, Supporting the Observance of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

IN RECOGNITION OF SERVICE OF FRANK FARMER AND DON WESSEL AS CHARTER MEMBERS TO THE OZARKS TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor two men who have spent many years serving their community in Springfield, Missouri, as charter members of the Board of Trustees of the Ozarks Technical Community College. Frank Farmer and Don Wessel both enjoyed long and distinguished careers in private business before being selected by their neighbors to serve on the newly created Board of Trustees, following the creation of the school in April 1990. They have each been reelected to consecutive terms since then; at the end of this month, both men will be ending their tenure of service.

Farmer and Wessel helped shape the growth and direction of a school that serves

the students of 13 public school districts in southwest Missouri—and far beyond that. The growth of the school has been nothing short of a phenomenon, with enrollment this year topping more than 10,000 students. OTC, as it is known to many local students and residents, is also moving forward on plans to expand its operation to a second campus in Ozark, Missouri, with an eye on affording greater accessibility to its growing student body.

From its modest beginnings in central Springfield at the old vocational-technical school, OTC has blossomed into a modern campus that has helped revitalized center Springfield and help train its local youth.

From the beginning, Farmer and Wessel led the way in developing the infrastructure and educational leadership OTC would depend upon for its spectacular growth. First they hired an effective president in Norman Myers. The board of trustees, led by president Wessel from 1992 to 1994 and Farmer from 1994 to 1996, embarked on a plan to build new classroom buildings and greatly expand the number and diversity of available courses available to students.

Farmer's background in education includes service on the Willard Board of Education, on which he also served as president. Journalist, author and dairyman, Farmer has lent his experience and expertise to several public boards and charities, while attending to his duties as the editorial page editor of the Springfield News-Leader before his retirement there.

Wessel is a well-known car dealer and philanthropist, who has been active in the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, American Red Cross, Cox Medical Centers, and has served on virtually every public and civic board in the Springfield area.

To Mr. Farmer and Mr. Wessel, I wish to extend a heartfelt "thank you and well done" for their untiring work over the last two decades. Their unflagging efforts have made the Springfield area a better place in which to live, and the Ozarks Technical Community College a beacon of educational excellence for the entire region.

HONORING PATRICK WAYNE GUTHRIE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Patrick Wayne Guthrie of Excelsior Springs, Missouri. Patrick is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1309, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Patrick has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Patrick has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Patrick Wayne Guthrie for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 312) revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2008, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2009, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2010 through 2013:

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to support the Fiscal Year 2009 Democratic Budget Resolutions.

Once again this year, the President's budget proposal made a number of cynical choices and cut or eliminated programs that make a real difference in people's lives. The President's budget calls for more than \$1 trillion in tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans over 10 years at the expense of vital domestic programs that benefit millions of people. The President's cuts include \$479 billion of Medicare cuts, and \$94 billion in cuts to Medicaid over 10 years; more than \$18 billion over 5 years in new fees for veterans and military retirees; cuts to EPA grants that help protect public health and maintain environmental quality; and the elimination of several state and local law enforcement programs, including Byrne Grants and COPS funding.

The President has already taken a projected 10-year surplus of \$5.6 trillion and turned it into a \$3.2 trillion deficit. Now the President wants to slash funding for crucial domestic programs while he continues to spend \$10.3 billion a month for the war in Iraq—a war that has already cost more than \$495 billion and which may cost more than \$3 trillion by the end of our involvement. This war has cost Americans far too much—most importantly, in terms of lives.

The President's budget also misses the boat by choosing not to fund programs which would stimulate economic growth and benefit all Americans. For example, the President's budget does not include much-needed increases for things such as rehabilitating our Nation's crumbling schools and highways, securing our ports, investing in renewable energy, and helping lower the cost of healthcare for millions of children and seniors. And I was also dismayed to see the number of cuts in the President's budget that come at the expense of our Nation's poorest citizens. To cite just one example, the budget eliminates the Community Services Block Grants which reduce poverty and provide assistance for individuals dealing with housing, health, nutrition, energy, and substance abuse problems.

I am proud that the Democratic budget resolutions restore sanity to our Nation's fiscal policy. Our budget increases veterans funding for 2009 by \$3.6 billion (8 percent) above current services; provides additional resources to address long-standing domestic priorities within a fiscally responsible framework, including increased funding for scientific innovation and energy initiatives, and education, training, and social services; and it rejects the President's